

In Which Mike Explains Sex by the-singular-peep

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Summary: It was a hard topic to approach - one you had to be careful, direct, and unashamed about. It was difficult, especially with children. That's why Mike was glad he was only 13 years old and had no intention of having anything to do with it for much longer. Until there came a question. [IN WHICH EVERYTHING IS OKAY SERIES. COMPLETE. PT 10/?. PART 9: "WEDNESDAY ... WALKS."]

In Which Mike Explains Sex

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January 26, 1985. Saturday.

"Mike? What is a 'sex'?"

Mike stopped for a second, and set down his milk glass. It was about one pm on a Saturday, a *friend day* for Eleven, and she and Mike were at the table after lunch. Karen had gone to get Holly dressed for her preschool event that night and Nancy had gone off quite some time ago to study. That left Mike and Eleven alone, and left Eleven with a particular question.

"Oh, uh. Sexes are... Like. You're a girl, and I'm a boy." Mike tried. He hadn't been prepared to answer this question, but maybe he was doing alright.

"No." Eleven said plainly, and Mike felt her stop kicking her feet under the table. She was getting impatient.

"Uh.. Girls have... different parts than boys." Mike flushed a little, but this was okay. This was fine.

Eleven's voice got a little petulant.

"No."

"Okay, fine. Boys have.. uhm... penises, and girls have -"

"No, what is a *sex*?!"

Mike took a sip of his milk, not understanding at first. He sat for a minute. And then hit him, right as his milk went down his throat, and he nearly died.

"UHM-" He sputtered, coughing and clutching his chest. Eleven had startled out of her chair and was now standing, her arms ready as if she were about to punch whatever villain had caused Mike to choke. Mike wasn't ready for this. He was *not* ready to give *The Talk*. As soon

as he calmed, he sat for a second. Eleven looked at him and made a face.

"What?" Mike said honestly. Eleven stomped her foot, and her fork slid off the table from the other end.

"What is one?"

"Okay, that's fine, I was hoping you'd forget. Okay. Okay. Um. Uh. Sex is when -" He paused, his hands trying to speak for him as he made a pained expression. "Sex is when... when two people...."

Mike was continuously putting his hands together and then pulling them apart. He couldn't seem to get the words out.

"They make together." She tried, also putting her hands together. Mike flushed bright red.

"No! I mean- yes, kind of, but - " He didn't know where he was going with this. "I'm gonna get Nancy."

He turned away so that Eleven wasn't looking at his red face and attempted to walk upstairs, but he was stopped by an invisible force. Not harshly, but a soft tug at his being, and when he turned around El had a tiny drip of blood coming from her nostril.

"You." She said softly, and Mike couldn't fight that. She looked so confused, and Mike knew how uneasy she still was with everyone but him. And so he gathered himself, took Eleven by the hand, and led her upstairs to his room. Where he was sure no one would walk in on him having this extremely uncomfortable conversation.

Once they arrived in Mike's room, the older boy sat down carefully on his bed and gestured for the girl to do the same.

"Okay. So, you know how... You know how I have a mom and a dad, right?"

Eleven nodded, but the look on her face told Mike that she didn't quite understand where this was going. He continued.

"I wouldn't be here without a mom and a dad. Both of them."

"Dead?" Eleven said suddenly, gasping. Mike laughed, and Eleven looked extremely offended.

"No, no, not dead. Its more like.... Okay. So you've watched mom make lunch, right? Without the peanut butter *and* the jelly, she can't make a sandwich. Without a mom *and* a dad, they can't make a baby."

"Baby? Why a baby?" Eleven was even more confused now, and Mike's face got even redder (if that was possible). He wasn't doing a very good job at this.

"S-sex is how a mom and dad make a baby. Its the process the man and woman do to... to get a baby."

"Like buying Eggos." Eleven finished for him, or tried to, thinking she understood it. "Can..." Mike saw in her face that she couldn't seem to find the right words then, and so she pointed carefully to herself and then to Mike. "*We* get a baby?" She paused, then pointed again. "Boy," She said with her finger at his chest, and then to herself, "Girl."

"Aah, no!" Mike shouted suddenly, and too loudly, he realized, as he saw Eleven flinch back. "I- I mean, not that I don't - I mean, not- not now, we're just kids, I just-"

"Kids can't buy a baby?"

"People don't *buy* babies, El. They...They make them. We can't- *shouldn't* make them."

She held her hands out, one held far to the left and the other to the right. "Peanut butter." She said to one, then to the other, "Jelly..." She put the two fists beside each other, close enough that they were touching. "Baby?"

Mike sighed. It was going to be a long day.